

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY



STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

TITLE: SCHOOL WEEK AND WORK WEEK FOR MINORS NUMBER: ES.C.4.1

**CHAPTER: RCW [49.12](#); [49.30](#); [13.64.010](#)
WAC [296-125-027](#); [296-131-120](#)**

ISSUED: 8/12/03

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY DISCLAIMER

This policy is designed to provide general information in regard to the current opinions of the Department of Labor & Industries on the subject matter covered. This policy is intended as a guide in the interpretation and application of the relevant statutes, regulations, and policies, and may not be applicable to all situations. This policy does not replace applicable RCW or WAC standards. If additional clarification is required, the Program Manager for Employment Standards should be consulted.

This document is effective as of the date of print and supersedes all previous interpretations and guidelines. Changes may occur after the date of print due to subsequent legislation, administrative rule, or judicial proceedings. The user is encouraged to notify the Program Manager to provide or receive updated information. This document will remain in effect until rescinded, modified, or withdrawn by the Director or his or her designee.

This policy addresses the rules for the hours of work for minors in both **Non-agriculture and Agriculture jobs**. The purpose is to better clarify when restricted work hours do and do not apply. The links to the tables for the allowed work hours is at the end of each section (e.g., non-agriculture or agriculture). Additional information on the child labor regulations and helpful resources can be found on our teen worker web page at:
<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers/default.asp>

For the purposes of scheduling work hours:

- The work week for minors is the calendar week, Sunday through Saturday.
- The school week is Monday through Friday. Any day or week with any amount of school time is considered a school day and school week. Minors cannot work during school hours.
- Those enrolled in alternative schools, including home school arrangements, are subject to these same rules.
- In general, the school year is Labor Day through June 1. When school begins before Labor Day or ends after June 1, the “school” hours of work will apply.
- School vacations are winter and spring breaks and summer vacation.

Exemptions:

- 16- and 17-year-old minors emancipated by court order are not governed by any limitations under the hours of work regulations.
- School year hours of work provisions do not apply to minors who:
 - are 16 or 17 years old with their GED, or who have graduated, or are enrolled in college courses while they are still in high school, (for example, students in “running start” programs taking college-level courses that are credited towards a degree and can include liberal arts or technical/professional coursework);
 - are named on a valid certificate of marriage; or
 - are named as a parent on a valid certificate of birth.
- **Note:** For the above exemptions, employers must still obtain a minor work permit and may not work minors in any prohibited occupation.

Non-agricultural Jobs

Hours for 14- and 15-year-old minors:

- During winter and spring breaks, 14- and 15-year-old minors can work up to 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week, but not more than 6 days per week. During these breaks, the start and stop times for 14- and 15-year-old minors are the same as those listed for the school year, 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (The 7:00 p.m. quit time reflects compliance with federal law.)
- During summer vacation, the hours of work are as listed above, with a start time of 7:00 a.m. and quit time of 9:00 p.m.
- During a holiday school week (partial school week), such as the Thanksgiving week, the maximum number of hours for 14- and 15-year-old minors is 3 hours per day on a school day, 8 hours on a non-school day, and not more than 6 days per week. The maximum number of hours of work is 16 hours per week.

Hours for 16- and 17-year-old minors:

- During winter and spring breaks, and summer vacation, 16- and 17-year-old minors may work up to 8 hours per day and 48 hours per week, but not more than 6 days per week. The start and stop times are 5:00 a.m. and midnight on nights before a non-school day.
- During a holiday school week (partial school week), such as Thanksgiving week, the maximum number of hours for 16- and 17-year-old minors is 4 hours on a school day (6 hours with a special variance), 8 hours on a Friday or any non-school day and not more than 6 days per week. The maximum number of hours of work for 16- and 17-year-old minors is 20 or 28 (with the optional special variance).
- Start and stop times are determined according to school or non-school status for the each workday.
- For any part of the school year, any day (except Friday, when 8 hours are allowed) that has any amount of school time is still considered a school day and those hours apply. For 16- and 17-year-old minors who end school before June 1, summer vacation hours apply.
- Link to chart with hours summarized: [Teens at Work: Facts for Employers, Parents and Teens](#). This can also be found through the web page listed at the top of this document.

Agricultural Jobs

Under Washington's law, the agricultural minor work regulations do not apply to those who are immediate family members of the employer ([WAC 296-131-001](#)). Washington includes parents and grandparents in this exemption. For employers covered by the federal law (i.e, the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#)), the agricultural exemption only applies to minors employed on farms owned and operated by their parents. [Note: Additionally, in Washington State, minors working on their parents' farm are exempt from workers' compensation coverage, but are not exempt if working on their grandparents' farm].

Hours for 14- and 15-year-old minors:

- During winter, spring, and summer breaks, 14- and 15-year-old minors can work up to 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week, but not more than 6 days per week. During these breaks, the start and stop times for 14- and 15-year-old minors are 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.; 12- and 13-year-old minors can work these same hours for hand-harvest of berries, bulbs, cucumbers, and spinach.
 - Exception: 7 days a week is allowed in dairy, livestock, hay harvest and irrigation.
- During a holiday school week (partial school week), such as the Thanksgiving week, the maximum number of hours for 14- and 15-year-old minors is 21 hours.

Hours for 16- and 17-year-old minors:.

- During winter and spring breaks, and summer vacation, 16- and 17-year-old minors may work up to 10 hours per day and 50 hours per week, but not more than 6 days per week. The start and stop times are 5:00 a.m. and 10 p.m. on nights before a non-school day.
 - Exception: 7 days a week allowed in dairy, livestock, hay harvest and irrigation.
 - Exception: 60 hours a week allowed in harvest of peas, wheat, and hay.
- During a holiday school week (partial school week), such as Thanksgiving week, the maximum number of hours for 16- and 17-year-old minors is 4 hours on a school day, and not more than 6 days per week. The maximum number of hours of work for 16- and 17-year-old minors is 28.
- Start and stop times are determined according to school or non-school status for each workday.
- Link to chart with hours of work summarized: [Young Workers in Agriculture](#). This can also be found through the web page listed at the top of this document.